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Thesis

THE LURE OF GOLD

(Its effects upon the expansion and development of the United States.)

Submitted by

Albert George Lunn

(A.B., Northwest Nazarene, 1929)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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THE LURE OF GOLD

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THE LURE OF GOLD

(Its effects upon the expansion and development of the United States.)

Gold! what a host of memories the word commands, and how deeply has it stirred and still does stir the mind of man! Few people of the civilized world are free from some phase or other of the paramount influence of this Monarch of metals. As the most widely treasured commodity it has woven itself into the very fabric of the human consciousness. Its lure has led men to suffering, ruin, and death: to exploration, discovery, and success.

The greed for gold has often brought great suffering to humanity. Thousands have been put to the sword in order to seize rich mining districts, or, as in the sixteenth century in Mexico, have spent their lives toiling in the mines in order to enrich their taskmasters. It is estimated that one and one-half million Indians were killed by the Spaniards to get one million pounds of gold in Mexico. Such calamities to the possessors of gold have associated a curse with the metal. Kings have prohibited its possession by their subjects on pain of death, fearing its curse would accompany its possession. Socrates, that venerable Greek philosopher, having received twenty minae of gold from a grateful disciple, refused them and sent them back at the command of his

conscience.[1] Even the New Testament philosopher, Paul, in a letter to the young preacher, Timothy, wrote: "The love of money is the root of all evil."[2] This contempt for gold, held by philosophers and others, could not long endure. A reactionary idea soon developed. Agricola was one of the first to advance the philosophy that evils are not connected with gold itself; but are caused by the unbridled lust for it in the heart of man.[3]

It is unfortunate that greed for gold has associated a curse with the metal; for the search for the precious treasure has been responsible for many great discoveries and expansion movements in the history of the world. This is especially true of the history of the United States. Columbus discovered this continent while searching for a route to the wealth of the Indies, and gold was the principal drawing card of the Indies. The same continent was later largely explored by those seeking a north-west passage to those same Indies. The California gold rush of 1849 emphasizes the importance of gold as the cause for one of the most beneficial expansion movements in the history of the United States. The search for gold has not always rewarded men in the forms they had expected; but has resulted in the discovery of the world itself, of science, and knowledge. "Just as

1 White, B. GOLD, p. 7
2 I Timothy VI:10
3 White, B. GOLD, p. 1-48

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the alchemists were the parents of modern chemistry; so the gold hunters were the uncoverers of the world." [1]

> "Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, on the sea shore in the land of Edom. And Huram sent him by the hands of his servants ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they came with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and fetched from thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to King Solomon----- And the servants also of Huram and the servants of Solomon which brought gold from Ophir, brought algum trees and precious stones."
> II Chronicles VIII: 18; IX: 10

Ophir has been placed in India, the Malayan Peninsular, the Moluccas, Armenia, Phrygia, Spain, Peru, and Sumatra.[2] We will not enter the controversy as to the exact location of Ophir, for as far as this paper is concerned, Ophir is another El Dorado, and lies wherever the earth is rich in products and wherever there are human beings capable of tapping its resources.[3] By 1450 the Indies, a term which included Cathay (China), Zipango (Japan), and India, had taken shape as the Ophir of beautiful dreams. Such stories as those told by Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant who spent several years in China, were tales of the wealth almost beyond the imagination. Polo wrote a book in which he gave second hand tales of the Island Kingdom of Zipango, and of

1 Greenbie. GOLD OF OPHIR, p. 11
2 Keane. GOLD OF OPHIR, p. 1-59
3 Greenbie. GOLD OF OPHIR, p. 1-54

the inhabitants who possessed endless quantities of gold and were only partly civilized.[1] The palace of the king of this treasure island was described as roofed with gold, as churches in England were coated with lead, and its public chambers and rooms were covered with gold two fingers thick. The floor of one of its reception rooms might well have comprised treasure enough to ransom half of the Kings of Christendom----- and it could be reached by sea! "Cathay", the "wealth of the Indies", and the "gold of Ophir", were terms coined in the same bank, and meant the same thing to the gold seeker; lands of golden opportunity, where great gain was to be had but for the taking. Traders were only beginning to realize the importance of the Indies and that their beautiful dreams were about to come true, when Constantinople was captured by the infidel Turk and the important routes to the Indies were closed to Western Europe. Now began an era of desperate search for new and shorter routes to the Indies. Columbus was one of the navigators who undertook the search.

Great significance has been placed upon the scientific value of Columbus' voyage and the impression has been given by most brief histories that the one reason why Columbus made his epochal voyage was to prove to the world that his scien-

1 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol.I, p. 18-19

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1 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol. I, p. 14-19

tific calculations as to the shape of the earth were facts and not theories. Little consideration has been given to another probable cause for the undertaking, which was the belief that he would acquire some of the much-sought-for wealth of the Indies. In the Columbian Library at Seville there is a copy of the 1485 edition of the "Book of Ser Marco Polo", the gist of which has already been given, with manuscript notes made by Christopher Columbus. There is no certainty as to when these notes were made; but they, at any rate, show that Columbus at some time had an interest in the stories told about the fabulous wealth of the East. Columbus carried a letter to the great Khan of Cathay on his epoch making voyage. That Columbus expected to get gain seems quite evident from the agreement struck with the Spanish Sovereigns before he embarked on his first voyage.[1] He was to be admiral of all the lands he might discover in the Ocean Sea, and he and his heirs could reserve the tenth part of all the gold and silver found in these lands; they might contribute one-eighth of the cost of fitting out a second expedition to these parts and receive one-eighth of the total profits. It appears that both Columbus and Spain had high hopes of obtaining great wealth by this voyage. His dreams had not forsaken him on his arrival in Haiti. He

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1 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol.I p. 19

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1 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. Vol. 1 p. 19

called simple natives "Indians" and expected daily that they would lead him to their great Khan; futhermore he believed he had put into the hands of the Spaniards "Mount Soporo" (Mt. Ophir) which it took Solomon's ships three years to reach."[1] A second and third voyage, however, failed to produce the desired gold and Columbus was consequently brought into disfavor in Spain, and died of a broken heart not realizing that he had given greater resources to the world than the wealth of the Indies by discovering a new continent.[2]

The lure of the "gold of Ophir" or the search for the "wealth of the Indies" not only was a factor which influenced the discovery of America; but also one which resulted in the exploration of a large portion of the continent. When John Cabot left Bristol in 1497 he went westward with the determination to find the Island of Zipango (Japan) and the lands from which Oriental caravans brought their goods to Alexandria. The voyage was a failure as far as a passage to the rumored gold mines of Japan was concerned; but this and a later voyage resulted in the first discovery of the continent of North America and an exploration of its coast from Nova Scotia down as far as North Carolina or farther. Henry VII exercised his Scotch economy by alotting £10 to Cabot for a discovery that later became the basis of England's claim to America.

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1 Greenbie. GOLD OF OPHIR, p. 11
2 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol.I, p. 19-25

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1 Greenbie, GOLD OF OPHIR, p. 11 a
2 Channing, Edward, HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol I p. 19-26

The New World had been a diasppointment to all except the Spaniards as far as gold was concerned; but the enormous quantities of gold reaching into millions procured by Spanish adventurers from down-trodden natives had, in addition to making Spain the richest nation of the world, kindled the imagination of all Europe. Speculation was at white heat and numerous companies were formed to go to the New World to seek gold. Such was the Virginia Company, an English Company with high hopes of success, and a two fold purpose.[1] The members of the Company hoped to find the long sought for passage to the Indies. They believed this passage would lead through the continent somewhere near the point they had selected for their colony. They had no unreasonable expectations that gold and silver would be found there to pay the expenses of the trips to India. Explorers of Virginia had reported signs of gold, and Raleigh's own men had seen gold or copper ornaments worn by the native Indians. Virginia was described as a land "where gold and silver were more plentiful than copper in England;" but several tests of the metal proved it to be "fool's gold." As a matter of fact there was gold in the region as was later proved by the production of half a million dollars in gold from the mines of Virginia and North Carolina from 1804 to 1853.[2]

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1 Kingsbury, S. M. THE RECORDS OF THE VIRGINIA COMPANY, p. 1-38

2 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol. I, p. 151

The New World had been a disappointment to all except the Spaniards as far as gold was concerned, but the enormous quantities of gold reaching into millions yearly by Spanish adventurers from down-trodden natives had, in addition to making Spain the richest nation of the world, kindled the imagination of all Europe. Speculation was at white heat and numerous companies were formed to go to the New World to seek gold. Such was the Virginia Company, an English Company with high hopes of success, and a two fold purpose. The members of the Company hoped to find the long sought for passage to the Indies. They believed this passage could lead through the continent somewhere near the point they had selected for their colony. They had no unreasonable expectations that gold and silver would be found there to pay the expenses of the trips to India. Explorers of Virginia had reported signs of gold and Raleigh's own men had seen gold or copper ornaments worn by the native Indians. Virginia was described as a land "where gold and silver were more plentiful than copper in England;" but several tests of the metal proved it to be "fool's gold." As a matter of fact there was gold in the region as was later proved by the production of half a million dollars in gold from the mines of Virginia and North Carolina from 1804 to 1853.[2]

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1 Kingsbury, S. M. THE RECORDS OF THE VIRGINIA COMPANY, p. 1-30

2 Channing, Edward. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, Vol. I, p. 181

Had it been found two hundred years earlier what would have happened?

In the search for the gold and wealth of the Indies America was discovered and in the search for the northwest passage to those same Indies great sections of the continent were explored. Thus the search for gold was already fruitful in discovery and exploration; but with the exception of the Spanish discoveries in South America little of the actual metal had been found in the Indies or in America. By the nineteenth century the search for gold had long ago ceased to be a force behind navigation and exploration; but the discovery of the actual yellow metal in California in 1848 was to show the world that gold still had power to lure men over mountain, plain, and sea, and to directly cause a great expansion movement of a great nation.

Before eighteen hundred forty-eight, the year of the momentous discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, the portion of North America now composing the State of California, was a territory practically unknown to the American people as a whole. Situated two thousand miles from the nearest state on the distant side of a trackless plain and an almost insurmountable range of mountains, it was as remote to the thoughts of Americans as it was distant from their homes. Its potential value was appreciated only by a few statesmen who realized the possibilities of the spacious harbor of San

Francisco as a center of commerce. A few of the more adventuresome frontier spirits, however, braving the hardship and danger of travel had journeyed by ox-team across the plains and over the mountains to the fertile farmlands of the California Valleys. Here with those who had come by boat around Cape Horn, they combined to form a nucleus of American life that greatly differed in its industry and activity with the habits of the lazy, easy-going Mexican, Spanish, and Indian population. The industrious Americans soon began to prosper. Their large fields of grain and ever increasing herds of cattle and sheep became a "thorn in the flesh" to the Mexican rulers and jealously and hatred was the result.[1]

In the summer of 1846, a considerable portion of the Mexican population, led by ambitious men, began to anticipate a date at which the American residents would be in the ascendant, if immigration were not stopped, and organized to prevent any more Americans from entering California. Force was threatened. The Americans were only too glad to fight and a few freebooters took possession of the Mexican town of Sonoma, raised over the town a new flag on which was crudely painted the picture of a bear as the symbol of their independence, and innaugurated what was known as the "Bear Flag Republic." The United States officer, John Charles Fremont,

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 1-68

organized the Americans and continued the revolution with the result that the Mexicans were vanquished and that California was acquired as a territory of the United States in March, 1847. [1]

One of the most prominent citizens of California at this time was a Swiss by the name of John Sutter.[2] He owned a ranch of several thousand acres, was the largest grain producer in the Sacramento Valley, and probably in California. He owned 12,000 cattle, 2,000 horses and mules, 15,000 sheep, and 10,000 hogs. He employed 300 white men and 1,000 Indians and half-breeds. On a hill overlooking his fields of grain was the famous Sutter Fort, five hundred feet long and one hundred and fifty feet wide, fortified by 12 cannon and a garrison of forty Indians in uniform. Sutter was lord of all he possessed and boasted that he was not afraid of anyone.

In August 1847 Sutter engaged James W. Marshall to build a saw and grist mill for him in order that he might supply the increasing demand for flour and lumber. Immigrants were arriving in California each fall and they all had to have flour and needed lumber with which to build their homes. Marshall was to furnish the labor. A location was finally selected on the American River forty miles from Fort Sutter.

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1 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 99-121; Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 163-175; Hittell, T.M. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 453-467

2 Sabin, Edwin. GOLD, p. 178-181

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1 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 99-121; Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 182-176; Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 455-487

2 Rabin, Edwin. GOLD, p. 175-181

The place where gold was found, was chosen because of its convenience to timber and because it was possible to transfer lumber thence to Fort Sutter by wagon. [1]

On August 19, 1847 Peter L. Wimmer, Jennie Wimmer and ten Indians, set out for Coloma, and the work commenced on the mill as soon as they arrived. Wimmer was engaged as overseer, Mrs Wimmer as housekeeper, and all were under the direction of Marshall. The work on the mill progressed slowly and it was not until December that the dam head gate had been completed. Every night the water was turned on so as to wash out the sand and gravel which had been dug up by the men during the day. This was considered by Marshall as a more certain way of getting rid of it than shovelling, as by the latter method considerable gravel would fall back from the bank into the race. [2]

On the morning of April 19, 1848, after the water had been turned off by shutting down the head gate, Marshall and Wimmer were walking leisurely along the tail race of the mill, where the water had run all night and washed away all loose dirt dug up by the men the day before. Marshall happened to observe a shining specimen laying on a flat rock close to the side of the race. Picking it up and turning

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 69-76; Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 124-125.
2 See footnote 1 on page 12

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD MINES, p. 69-[illegible]; Mitchell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 124-125.
2 See footnote 1 on page 12

it over in his hands, it required no great stretch of imagination to consider it a very remarkable representation of the "Bear" which adorned the flag he had lately helped to raise as an emblem of California independence. The specimen at the time attracted his attention more because of its pecular shape and queer likeness to a bear than for its probable value. Handing it to Wimmer, he said, "what do you think of that?" Peter took it in his hand, felt its weight, and replied: "I would take my pay in that metal!" He was becomming convinced that what his wife had so often said must be true: that the specks of shining metal they had so often seen in the streams were gold. [1]

Jennie Wimmer had prepared to make a kettle of soap that day and the two men had fixed the kettle of lye over the fire before they had left the cabin. Marshall suggested; "Well, Peter, we will send that to Jennia and let her boil it in her soap kettle all day, and see if it will tarnish it." Thus agreed they sent it to Jennie by Wimmer's boy. She threw it into the soap kettle after declaring positively "that it was gold," and there it remained for the day.

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p.69-76; Bancroft, H. CALIFORNIA, p. 44-89; p. 72-80; Hittell, T. H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA,

It over in his hands, it required no great stretch of imagination to consider it a very remarkable representation of the "bear" which adorned the flag he had lately helped to raise as an emblem of California independence. The specimen at the time attracted his attention more because of its peculiar shape and queer likeness to a bear than for its probable value. Handing it to Slater, he said, "What do you think of that?" Peter took it in his hand, felt its weight, and replied, "I would take my pay in that metal!" He was immediately convinced that what his wife had so often said to be true: that the specks of shining metal they had so often seen in the streams were gold.[1]

Jennie Slater had prepared to make a kettle of soap that day and the two men had filled pie tins of lye over the fire before they had left the house. Everyone suggested, "Well, Peter, we will send that to Jennie and let her boil it in her soap kettle all day, and see if it will harden it." Thus agreed they sent it to Jennie by Slater's boy. She stirred it into the soap kettle after declaring positively, "that it was gold," and there it remained for the day.

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p.89-90; Bancroft, H. CALIFORNIA, p. 44-45; p. 72-73; Hittell, J. S. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA.

Mrs. Wimmer was the only person at the mill who was convinced that the specimen was real gold; but her positiveness did not impress any of the men. What could a woman know of such matters, they reasoned; but Jennie's opinion was of more value than they guessed; for when a little girl she had gone to the mines of Georgia with her father and had learned to spot rich gold "finds" almost as readily as her father. No inquiry was made about the nugget until the next morning at breakfast. Then several jests were sprung at Jennie's expense. She was asked what kind of soap her gold made? Would it do away with the necessity of grease in soap making? If so, there was plenty more out there in the sand and gravel.[1]

Finally, exasperated by the ridicule of the men, Jennie got her kettle, poured out the soap into a trough, and there in the bottom of the kettle was the beautiful nugget, polished bright by the action of the lye. Seizing it, she rushed into the cabin, flung it upon the table before her husband and Marshall shouting "there is your nugget and it is pure gold." [1]

Peter Wimmer was now fully converted to the belief that gold was there. The others admitted that it might be gold. Marshall was not enthusiastic about the discovery;

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 76-84

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK; p. 75-86

and did not make any attempt to have the gold scientifically tested till four or five days later, when his usual business required him to make a trip to Fort Sutter. The Fort was forty miles away and it could hardly be expected that a man would make a special trip merely to test a few specimens which, in all probability, would prove worthless.

At Fort Sutter tests with aqua fortis proved that the nuggets were, in very fact, gold. Captain Sutter personally accompanied Marshall back to the Mill and the news of the test brought great joy to all concerned, except the old Captain himself, who feared that his ranch would be destroyed as a result of a gold rush.

It was now that Jennie Wimmer's knowledge of the methods of gold mining proved useful. She showed the little company how to obtain gold by washing the sand by the process called "panning." She was none other than the "Georgian miner" who introduced the use of the "cradle", a trough arrangement made out of planks and operated by four men.[1] One man shovelled up the dirt, the second carried it to the cradle and dashed it down upon the grating sieve, placed horizontally at the head of the machine, the wires of which, being close together only allowed the smaller particles of earth and sand to fall through; the third man rocked the cradle,

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 79

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 70

while a fourth kept flinging water upon the mass of earth inside. The lighter earth was carried off by the water and a black sediment was left at the bottom, which was dried in the sun, the dirt dust blown away, leaving the particles of shining gold dust. It was not unusual to procure as much as two hundred dollars worth of gold dust per day in this way.[1]

Thus it was that a woman played an important part in a discovery that was to benefit the world by giving it many millions of dollars worth of gold. It was her enthusiasm that caused the first tests of the discovered nuggets to be made, and her knowledge of mining methods enabled the men to get the yellow metal from the soil in amounts that convinced them that the gold was deposited there in worth-while quantities. Mr. E. H. Hargraves who discovered the gold fields in Australia in 1851, as a result of his mining experiences in California, paid tribute to Jennie Wimmer in the following words:

> "The Georgia miner taught the people in the first instance how to obtain the gold by washing, but for which in all probability, not withstanding what had been found of it, the story of its discovery might have passed away and become an idle tale like that of the shepherd who found gold near Wellington, in South Wales thirteen years before; for neither Captain Sutter nor Mr. Marshall knew how to obtain it, except by picking it up with their fingers." [2]

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 81
2 Hargraves, Edward. AUSTRALIA AND ITS GOLD FIELDS, p. 95

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 8.
2 Hargraves, Edward. AUSTRALIA AND ITS GOLD FIELDS, p. 40

The number of people engaged at the mill when gold was discovered was thirteen, including Mrs Wimmer. None of those who were first in the field ever became wealthy, and not one had the ability to retain a sufficiency of what he did make to render his old age happy.[1] Here is a fact for those who credit the superstition with regard to the number "13". Mr. Marshall who had never made a success at anything did not make good as a miner. He was never prosperous. In 1877 the legislature of California voted him a pension of $1,200 to continue for four years. Three years after his pension had run out Marshall died alone in his cabin at Kelsey's Diggings, Eldorado County, with not enough money for the expenses of his simple burial. Mr. and Mrs. Wimmer also died in poverty and were even compelled to sell the original first nugget, which they had kept as a souvenir, in order to procure money for the necessities of life. The niggardliness of state and national governments merit nothing but our condemnation for their neglect to appropriately reward the actors who were the means of bringing such prosperity and wealth to the world.[1]

The gold rush naturally divides itself into two parts: the rush to the mines of those who were already in or near California, and later the immigration by sea and land of those from far away after the news of the discovery had

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 75

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1 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 75.

slowly woven its way through the devious paths of travel to the States and to foreign shores. Gold was discovered at Coloma on January 19, 1848. Five days later it was tested at Fort Sutter, and Sutter and Marshall were at the mines by the first of February. Sutter attempted to keep the discovery secret, but of course the news soon leaked out. Nevertheless prospects were of little importance during February, March, and April. In May the editor of the California "Star" went to the mines to gather facts of interest for his readers. He evidently did not find much of noteworthy attention at the mines; for he returned May sixth and on May twentieth wrote of the departure from San Francisco of a fleet of launches "laden with superlatively silly people" on their way to the mines. He evidently changed his mind and caught the "gold fever" which had become so contagious that none were immune from its attacks; for soon after this he closed the office of his paper and in the window appeared a sign which read; "Gone to the mines."

By this time everyone in California was becoming excited over the mining prospects and their enthusiasm was increased daily by new discoveries andthe seemingly endless supply of the gold deposits. There was gold enough for everyone. The region of the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers were ladened with the precious "pay dirt" and rich "finds" were being discovered in the mountains sometimes in rich veins near the

surface. The "placer method" of following a gold-dust laden stream often resulted in the discovery of rich veins of ore in the bed of the stream or near its banks. Almost anyone could make a good days pay equipped only with a shovel, a pick-axe and a tin-pan, and when one place became exhausted all the miner had to do was to move to another claim. One man averaged twenty-five dollars per day for sixteen days. Thomas Larkin, the military governor, made a personal visit to the mines early in June and all that he had heard and much more than he had anticipated was true at the mines. He camped at a miner's camp occupied by eight Americans who operated two rockers at an average of sixty-four dollars for each man per day.[1] He saw two brothers who had a single pan between them, weigh the gold they had washed out in a day—one had seven dollars, the other eighty-two.[2] Excitement was running high and everyone from the least to the greatest was taking up mining as a quick way to make a fortune. Soldiers and sailors were deserting wholesale. The United States bark Anita had but six men left. Constable Henry Bee of San Francisco had ten prisoners, two of them charged with murder, he wanted to turn them over to another deputy; but there was none to be found, so he herded them into the road

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1 Hittell, T. H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 690
2 Ibid., p. 691

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On August seventeenth Mason, the military governor, wrote a letter to the adjutant general, and sent it by a special messenger to Washington, containing full and circumstantial account of the discovery of gold together with an account of his recent visit to the mines and twenty pounds of gold in proof and illustration of his report. It reached the government in time for President Polk to lay it before the people in his anual address on December 5, 1848. In this authoritative way the news spread. At first there were many who refused to believe the good news; but when specimens of the new gold were displayed and assayed at eighteen dollars an ounce, and new supplies kept arriving, not even the worst skeptics could continue to doubt. Private letters were

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1 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 124-206

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1 Bancroft, H.H. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 124-125

daily reaching their destinations in the Eastern States advising immediate trips to the gold fields. Newspapers gave glowing accounts of the new discoveries. In every large eastern city of America large companies were organized and in many cases incorporated for the development of mines in the far west, and private individuals were preparing for prospecting trips on their own responsibility. Eastern merchants invented all sorts of equipment for prospective "prospectors" and devoted whole store windows to the display of this paraphernalia.[1] The lure of gold and the desire for the yellow metal itself was stirring the imaginations of men in every walk of life, and eighteen forty-eight found them ready to follow the gleam as did the sea-rovers of old.[2]

There were three possible routes open to the individual who wished to reach the gold fields. He could go by boat around Cape Horn, take a boat to the Isthmus of Panama, cross the Isthmus on foot and take a boat to California, or he could go by the cheaper but more hazardous land route across the plains and Rocky Mountains. Only the well-to-do could take the water route.[3] Fares from New York to San Francisco were $400, and $100 to the Isthmus. Passage from the Isthmus

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1 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 129
2 Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 687-700; Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 226-234
3 Sabin, Edwin. GOLD, p. 223

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1 Ritchie, J.A. HISTORY OF SAN JOAQUIN. p. 170
2 Ritchie, J.A. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA. p. 207-208; Tyler, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA. p. 325-326
3 Bolton, Edwin. CALIF. p. 255

to California was as high as $600. In spite of the high rates and the increase in special ships bound for California there were always passengers who were willing to pay almost any price to go to the mines.

The first ship laden with gold seekers to arrive in San Francisco was the "California." [1] This ship had set sail from New York before the gold craze had struck the East. On January 13th she cast anchor off Panama and found fifteen hundred people waiting to be taken to California. The captain had already taken on extra passengers in South American ports and a riot almost followed when this was learned by the Americans clamoring for immediate passage to California. "American gold for Americans," was the cry. As high as one thousand dollars was offered for a single ticket; but the captain of the vessel could only crowd five hundred extra passengers on board and one thousand were left behind cursing the captain and bewailing their fate. On arriving in San Francisco the "California"was abandoned before night by all except the third-assistant engineer. Everyone had started for the mines directly upon their arrival.

On April 1st, the second ship en route for California arrived at Panama and found three thousand waiting for passage

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 126-132; Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 698

to the gold fields. On arriving in San Francisco the captain proved his intelligence by placing his crew on the United States battleship "Ohio" until he should be ready to sail again. Had he not done this he would have had no crew by night fall.[1]

By the middle of December one hundred barks, sloops, brigs, schooners, and small coasting steamers had left the Atlantic Coast for California by way of Cape Horn or for the Isthmus of Panama. In December and January, ninety vessels had sailed carrying eight thousand gold seekers to California.[2] During 1849 immigrants by sea numbered about thirty-five thousand not including about three thousand deserting sailors. Twenty-three of the thirty-five thousand were Americans, trained in American schools, imbued with American spirit and many of them were the choicest people from all the States.[3] These were to lay the foundation of the Golden State of the Union.

The water route was too expensive for many of those desiring to go to California, and these were forced to wait until the trails opened in the spring of 1849. Various routes offered, but the most popular was the famous Platt Trail. Oregon and Mormon migration had familiarized this

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1 Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 698
2 Ibid., p. 699
3 Ibid., p. 700

route to the world. This trail started at Fort Leavenworth, continued westward to Salt Lake City, and from there extended southwest to San Francisco. There was not a house along the trail for twelve hundred miles between the Missouri frontier and Salt Lake City, and from Salt Lake City there was not a house for eight hundred and fifty miles to California. By April, 1849 twenty thousand gold seekers and hundreds of wagon teams had gathered at the frontier forts eager to start on the long journey across the plains.[1] This was the cheap and popular route. People of all professions and occupations had left their former life to go to the land of golden promise. The western farmer was there with his own stock and wagons, ready to go. Men from the cities and towns were there in great numbers, equipped for the journey. Even the poor could work their way by driving oxen for the better off. Niles reported that up to May 18, 2850 wagons had crossed the Missouri River at St. Joseph, and 1500 more at the other ferries. The winding lines of wagon teams stretched across the plains for miles, and the emigrants presented a picture that was at once as impressive as it was unique. Stansbury writes of them: "We have been in company with multitudes of emigrants the whole day. The road has been lined to a long extent with their wagons, whose white

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1 Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 104-118; Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 89-121

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1 Parson, W. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 104-110; Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 89-121

covers glistening in the sunlight, resembled, at a distance, the ships upon the ocean." [1]

The wagon teams organized into companies for protection, little need, since the Indians were at peace during most of 1849. Greater evils overtook the emigrants.[2] Cholera broke out among them at the start and had taken a toll of 5000 persons before they reached the hills beyond Fort Laramie. Inexperience demanded its price. Stock died. In twenty-four miles of travel along the trail covered by emigrants, Stansbury passed seventeen abandoned wagons and twenty-seven dead oxen. Beyond Fort Laramie in the heat and dust of the Humboldt Valley, stock literally faded away and thousands were forced to turn back to Salt Lake City. The romance of the journey had faded before grim reality. The monotony of the plains, the terrible heat, the sickness, the tragedy of deaths, flattened all buoyancy, and left instead only a sullen and dogged determination. It was a weary, but stern and serious group, that finally reached California, taught by bitter experience how to meet almost any emergency of a new environment.[3]

It is estimated that 42,000 people crossed the continent and reached the gold fields in 1849. [4] Most of these were of

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1 Stansbury,H. AN EXPEDITION TO THE GREAT SALT LAKE, p. 24
2 Paxson,F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 104-118
3 Turner,F. THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY, p. 222-243; 1-38
4 Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p.700

farmer stock; whether they possessed frontier experience or not before the start, the three-thousand mile journey toughened and seasoned all who reached California. Nearly all possessed those characteristic frontier qualities of individualism, independence, and initiative, which went to make up that unique individual known as an American. [1]

In 1846 the population of California numbered 10,000 white men, mostly Spaniards and Mexicans. At the end of 1849 the population was estimated 100,000. [2] Of this number at least seventy per cent were Americans, and it was this element that was to make a New America on the Pacific Coast. [2]

The new population was scattered widely over the entire gold producing section of California. Thousands of mining camps dotted the Sierra Nevadas and the banks of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. These camps were merely an aggregation around a small general-merchandise store, the proprietor of which generally ran a bar, dance hall, and gambling den in conjunction with his store, and was a past master in the art of relieving the miners of their newly acquired gold. These towns sprang up as if by magic and the phenominal growth of many of them is almost unbelievable. Such was the growth of Sacramento, [3] which was founded upon

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 89-121
2 Hittell, T.H. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 700
3 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 151

the old landing place of Sutter's Fort at the junction of the American and Sacramento Rivers. In April 1849 there were only four houses at the place. In August of the same year the town embraced about a square mile, and the number of inhabitants in tents and houses were about 10,000 people. Can the world match a growth like this?

The growth of San Francisco[1] was almost as remarkable as that of Sacramento. At first news of the gold discovery the town had practically been deserted. All the male inhabitants had gone to the mines; but with the realization that there was as much gold to be obtained by supplying the demands of the miners, as there was in digging the precious metal itself, men began to drift back to the towns. In August 1847 San Francisco was the only American town in California and its population numbered only 375 grown persons; but it was bragging that it would be a world port. By the end of 1849, in approximately two years, the population was 25,000.[2] The city had grown so fast that street construction and sewer systems had not reached the newer parts of the city. The streets were often planked, and where they were not, mud was often ankle deep, and many places had mud-holes that rendered the street almost impassible.[2] Streets were the

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 260-294; Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 148-149; Tuthill F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 289-291

2 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 150-154

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1 Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 260-294; Mitchell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 148-149; Tuthill F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 207-291

2 Mitchell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO, p. 150-154

general receptacle for all kinds of rubbish and the city was said to be famous for three things: rats, flees, and empty bottles. In spite of the filthy condition of the city, life was at a high speed, business flourished, and there was much real advancement. J.D. Borthwick in his recent book entitled "The Gold Hunters" says of San Francisco:

> "In the course of a month or a year, in San Francisco, there was more hard work done, more speculation schemes were conceived and executed, more buying and selling, more sudden changes in fortune, more eating and drinking, more smoking, swearing, gambling, and tobacco-chewing, more crime and profligacy, and at the same time, more solid advancement made by the people, as a body, in wealth, prosperity, and the refinements of civilization, than could be shown in an equal space of time by any community of the same size on the face of the earth." [1]

In less than two years the "LURE OF GOLD" precipitated approximately seventy thousand people in California. A more cosmopolitan group, could hardly be imagined. Chinamen, Mexicans, South Americans, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans, all had been attracted by the yellow treasure. Men of all professions, the farmer, the amateur prospector, the lawyer, the doctor, the professional gambler, mingled in the crowd. Many an unsuspecting miner with gold enough to make him comfortable for the rest of his life became a victim to one of these polished "card sharps." Loose women plied their trade without rebuke. To a casual observer, it would seem that gambling and drinking were the principal

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1 Borthwick, J.D. THE GOLD HUNTERS, p. 58

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1 Borthwick, J.D. THE GOLD HUNTERS, p. 86

pastimes. Formidable gangs such as the "Hounds" robbed and murdered and their numbers increased with alarming rapidity. Those who had come by sea contained an over-share of the undesireable element that proposed to live upon the recklessness and vices of the miners. The majority of the miners, however, were strong, resourceful, and intelligent individuals who believed in law and order and were imbued with the principles of Americanism.[1] It was not as if a bonanza had been struck within easy reach of the nations of the earth. California was two thousand miles from any well populated part of America, and five thousand miles from any European port. The journey was expensive and men who undertook it had collected "stake" at home. They were men who had no cause to "burn their bridges" behind them; for they had been successful and prosperous in life before they had come to the gold fields. They were adventurers; but men of courage, determination, and self-reliance. Their long journeys had taught them how to meet almost any situation. They were men of action as is shown by the summary justice which they dealt out to the criminals in their midst. They were charged with a persistent and spontaneous energy that enabled them to organize a democratic government, and form a model state con-

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1 Turner, F.J. THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY, p. 222-243; Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 294-315; 658-785

stitution without the aid of the central government of the United States.[1]

A remarkable feature of the history of California, a feature which emphasizes the American compositions of the new population, was the spontaneity, ease, and speed with which it developed its constitutional government and became a State.[2] A military government, erected by the United States had held temporary sway since the "Bear Flag" episode until the enormous influx of population in 1848; but fell out of place as the controlling power over a civilian American population. The new inhabitants were much in need of law; but had the hereditary dislike for military authority. Like the true American frontiersmen that they were, they wanted a democratic government. Accordingly, Congress was petitioned for a territorial government for the new El Dorado; but Congress was too much occupied with the pertinent question of freedom and slavery in the Southwest during its session of 1848-1849 to consider the petition of California. It adjourned with nothing done for the new territory. The mining population was irritated but not deeply troubled by this neglect; and now, with characteristic American initiative, proceeded to take the government into its own hands.

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2 Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 104-118; Tuthill,F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 262-283

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A unique feature of the history of California, a feature which emphasized the American composition of the new population, was the spontaneity, even, and speed with which it developed its constitutional government and became a State. A military government, created by the United States had been necessary only since the "Bear Flag" outbreak until the successful action of population in 1849; but full out of sight as the controlling power over a mixed American population. The new inhabitants were glad to meet of law; nor had the necessary ability for military authority. Only the true American frontiersmen felt that they, the people, wanted a democratic government. Accordingly, Congress was petitioned for a territorial government for the new El Dorado; but Congress was too much occupied with the sectional question of freedom and slavery in the territories during the session of 1849-1850 to consider the petition of California. It adjourned with nothing done for the new territory. The mining population was irritated but not deeply troubled by this neglect; and now, with characteristic American initiative, proceeded to take the government into its own hands.

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1. Thorpe, F.C. THE CONSTITUTION IN AMERICAN HISTORY, p. 158-
2. Bancroft, Hubert. CALIFORNIA, p. 99-102; 107-108;
3. Jackson, S. THE STORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 101-102;
Smith, J.P. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 265-269

Brigadier-General Riley, the military governor, cooperated with the desires of the Californians by calling a constitutional convention, which met at Monterey on September 1, 1849.[1] A constitution was framed and ratified by popular vote on November 13, and a few days later Governor Riley surrendered his authority into the hands of the newly elected governor, Burnett, and the officials of the new State. The document itself was almost identical with the constitutions of the thirty Eastern States already founded. It began with a "Declaration of Rights", including the noteworthy article on slavery which reads as follows: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for punishment of crime, shall ever be tolerated in this State." The significance of the prohibition of slavery in California is that it shows that true nationalism was a characteristic of the population, and prophesied the support of California for the Union in the civil war. T.H. Hittell, the Californian historian, says that the constitution, "not withstanding the haste with which it had been put together, was one of the best if not the best of all the thirty-one state constitutions then existing." [2]

The admittance of California into the Union as a State was connected with one of the most vital problems of the

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Brigadier-General Riley, the military governor, cooperated with the desires of the Californians by calling a constitutional convention, which met at Monterey on September 1, 1849. A constitution was framed and ratified by popular vote on November 15, and a few days later Governor Riley surrendered his authority into the hands of the newly elected governor, Burnett, and the officials of the new State. The document itself was almost identical with the constitutions of the thirty Eastern States already founded. It began with a "Declaration of Rights", including the noteworthy article on slavery which reads as follows: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for punishment of crime, shall ever be tolerated in this State." The significance of the prohibition of slavery in California is that it shows that true nationalism was a characteristic of the population, and prophesied the support of California for the Union in the civil war. T.H. Hittell, the Californian historian, says that the constitution, "not withstanding the haste with which it had been put together, was one of the best if not the best of all the thirty-one state constitutions then existing."[2]

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United States, the question of slavery. In 1850 there were fifteen free and fifteen slave States, a fact which insured equal legislation in Congress on the question of slavery. The South wanted California to come into the Union as a slave State and the North wished to gain control of slavery legislation by having California admitted as a free State. A stormy session of Congress resulted. Neither side wanted to give in to the other and various suggestions were made anywhere from proposing a territorial government for California, to ceding the territory back to Mexico. The value of the territory to the Union and the fear that she might set up an independent government finally resulted in the famous Compromise, called the "Omnibus Bill" by which California was to be admitted as a free State, and by which the inhabitants in the rest of the Mexican cession were to decide for themselves whether or not they would have slavery. The former concession was for the North, the latter for the South. In September 1850 California was admitted into the Union as a free State, giving the free States a majority in Congress. California was the first State in the geographic western half of the United States and the sixth State west of the Mississippi River. The LURE OF GOLD had done its work in creating a New America on the Pacific Coast two thousand miles from the nearest State. [1]

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The establishment of a State government and the admission of California into the Union did not result in immediate enforcement of law and order in the State itself. Corrupt officials secured positions of trust and conditions soon became so lax that criminals very seldom received justice. Such were the conditions in the realm of criminal law that between 1849 and 1856 over one thousand murders had been committed and only one legal conviction had been secured. The good citizens finally became exasperated with the inefficiency and corruptness of State Courts and formed the "Vigilantes of '56." [1] This group was a well organized body of men who had decided to see that justice was done in the case of several notorious criminals. Three thousand men enrolled in the society, hanged four murderers, and exiled about three hundred well-known criminals. The activities of the "Vigilantes" were orderly but forceful, and each criminal was given a fair trial. The indirect effect of the action of the Vigilantes was so strong that many of the most undesireable element left California and law and order were established. The "Vigilantes" were not a mob; but an organization of determined citizens who inaugurated a reform and brought to the front the principles of the better class of Californians, the majority of whom were for law and justice. [1]

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1 White, S.E. FORTY-NINERS, p. 150-258; Hough,E. THE PASSING OF THE FRONTIER, p. 57-82; Tuthill,F.HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 432-517; Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO p. 245

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1 White, B.E. FORTY-NINERS p. 110-126; Bancroft, H. WORK PACIFIC OF THE STATES, p. 29-32; Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA. p. 426-429; Mitchell, J.S. HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO p. 245

The immigrants to California were not mere wanderers who were ever in search for some imaginary El Dorado more wonderful than the last. They were men who could settle down and adapt themselves to less romantic occupations than gold hunting. This was proven by the advance of agriculture after 1850. In that year there were only 32,450 acres of improved farmland in California. The census of 1852 reported the wheat crops of the State at 271,763 bushels.[1] The crop of 1856 was nearly thirteen times as large.[1] The potato crop of 1852 was quite equal to the demand. In 1860 there were 2,468,000 acres of improved farmland and tons of wheat, wool, and other produce were being sent to Europe. The resourceful American had proved that he could farm as well as mine gold.

We maintain, then, that the majority of the Californian gold seekers were not men who washed a pan of gold one day and celebrated the feat by getting gloriously drunk the next; but men of strong character, democratic principles, and resourcefulness. The speed, ease, and spontaniety with which one of the greatest States of the Union was formed would seem to prove the truth of this statement. We will now consider some of the effects of the new gold upon the economics of the United States.

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1 Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 352

The immigrants to California were not mere wanderers who were ever in search for some imaginary El Dorado more wonderful than the last. They were men who could settle down and adapt themselves to less romantic occupations than gold hunting. This was proven by the advance of agriculture after 1860. In that year there were only 22,458 acres of improved farmland in California. The census of 1862 reported the wheat crops of the State at 271,782 bushels.[1] The crop of 1856 was nearly thirteen times as large.[1] The potato crop of 1852 was quite equal to the demand. In 1860 there were 2,468,000 acres of improved farmland and tons of wheat, wool, and other produce were being sent to Europe. The resourceful American had proved that he could farm as well as mine gold.

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1 Tuthill, V. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 552

Table I — Gold Production

Year	(a) World's Production	Year	(b) Production in United States	(c) Production in Calif.
1821-1830	$ 94,479,000	1845	$ 1,008,327	$
		1846	1,139,357	
1831-1840	134,841,000	1847	889,085	
		1848	10,000,000	10,000,000
1841-1851	363,928,000	1849	40,000,000	40,000,000
		1850	50,000,000	50,000,000
1851-1860	1,332,981,000	1851	55,000,000	55,000,000
		1852	60,000,000	60,000,000
1861-1870	1,263,051,000	1853	65,000,000	65,000,000
		1854	60,000,000	60,000,000
1871-1880	1,150,814,000	1855	55,000,000	55,000,000
		1856	55,000,000	55,000,000
		1857	55,000,000	55,000,000
		1858	50,000,000	50,000,000
		1859	50,000,000	50,000,000

The above table gives the world's production of gold by decades from 1821 to 1880; the production of the metal in the United States by years from 1845 to 1859; and the California gold production from the year of the discovery to 1859. It will be noticed that the production of the United States from 1848 to 1859 corresponds with that of California. This congruity is due to the fact that only negligible amounts of gold were produced elsewhere.

(a) Commerce Year Book. Vol. II (1929), p. 753
(b) Bristow, B.H. EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1875-'76, #64, p. 3-5
(c) Williams, Albert. MINERAL RESEARCH OF UNITED STATES, p. 183; Commerce Year Book, Vol. II (1929), p. 753; Crane, Walter. GOLD AND SILVER, p. 572-573

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		1848	10,000,000	10,000,000
1841-1851	363,928,000	1849	40,000,000	40,000,000
		1850	50,000,000	50,000,000
1851-1860	1,235,901,000	1851	55,000,000	55,000,000
		1852	60,000,000	60,000,000
1861-1870	1,265,051,000	1853	65,000,000	65,000,000
		1854	60,000,000	60,000,000
1871-1880	1,130,814,000	1855	65,000,000	65,000,000
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The above table gives the world's production of gold by decades from 1821 to 1880; the production of the metal in the United States by years from 1840 to 1859; and the California gold production from the year of the discovery to 1859. It will be noticed that the production of the United States from 1848 to 1859 corresponds with that of California. This congruity is due to the fact that only negligible amounts of gold were produced elsewhere.

(a) Commerce Year Book, Vol. II (1929), p. 752
(b) Bristow, B.H. EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1875-'76, #54, p. 3-6
(c) Williams, Albert. MINERAL RESEARCH OF UNITED STATES, p. 163; Commerce Year Book, Vol. II (1929), p. 753; Crane, Walter. GOLD AND SILVER, p. 672-673

In 1848 the world's supply of gold was low. The currency of the world needed a new supply of the precious metal. The United States had produced very little gold before 1848. Now in a single year California produced over $10,000,000 in gold which was obtained by the primitive methods of washing the gold from the sands with a tin-pan and by the use of the "cradle." The production rose to $40,000,000 in 1849 and in 1850 the production increased to $50,000,000. Quartz mining was introduced in 1851, and E.C. Matteson introduced hydraulic mining, the greatest advance ever made in placers, in 1852. Water under high pressure served through a nozzle called the "monitor," thrown two or three hundred feet with such a force that a crowbar could not be thrust into the jet, ate away whole hillsides, almost as hot water eats away sugar, the detritus passing through long sluice boxes. The method destroyed 15,000 acres of farm land before the method was abandoned in 1884 in favor of farming. Both the quartz and hydraulic methods were improvements in mining which increased the gold production, raising it to $65,000,000 in 1853. The United States had become the leading gold producing country of the world.

It is important to note that the discovery of gold in California, besides influencing later discoveries in America, led directly to the great discovery of the yellow metal in Australia, a discovery that opened a gold producing area

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It is important to note that the discovery of gold in California, besides influencing later discoveries in America, led directly to the great discovery of the yellow metal in Australia, a discovery that opened a gold producing area

which surpassed even California in production by 1859. The discovery was made by Hargraves, a gold specialist and mineral observer, who had gone from Australia to the gold mines of California early in 1849. While engaging in mining there he became convinced that similar gold bearing soil existed in Australia and in 1851 returned to Australia with the certainty of finding gold. In 1851, fifteen miles from Guyong in New South Wales, he washed his first pan of gold. In his ecstasy he said to his guide: "This is a remarkable day in the history of New South Wales. I shall be a baronet, you shall be knighted, and my old horse stuffed, put in a glass cage, and sent to England." [1] His prediction was not far astray; for he was nobly rewarded by the English government for his discovery of gold fields that produced millions in gold for the English Empire. [2]

A glance at Table I will show the enormous increase in the world's production of gold that was caused by the California and Australia discoveries. Tooke and Newmarch in their "History of Prices" assert that the world's stock of gold was increased by about $174,000,000 or by one third (27.6%) between 1848 and 1856. [3] In the twenty-five years following 1850 as much gold was given forth by the mines of

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1 Hargraves, Edward. AUSTRALIA AND ITS GOLD FIELDS, p. 116
2 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 76-84
3 Tooke and Newmarch. HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol. VI, p.155-158

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1 Hargraves, Edward, AUSTRALIA AND ITS GOLD FIELDS, p. 414
2 Allen and Avery, CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 75-84
3 Tooke and Newmarch, HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol. VI, p.165-168

the United States as had been produced in America since the discovery by Columbus. The estimates given by Laughlin are as follows: [1]

	Gold
1493-1850	$3,314,553,000
1851-1875	3,317,625,000

The economic effects of such an addition cannot be easily ascertained; but a few of the major effects can be suggested. In the immediate gold producing areas prices and wages rose by leaps and bounds. Prices in California reached an astonishing height. [2] Both wages and prices increased as much as three, four, and even five hundred per cent. Labor was so scarce that common team drivers received $30 per day, cooks got $25 per day, and rough labor brought $18 a day, "help" was scarce at $200 per month. Gold was everywhere abundant. Men would pay almost any price for a trifle. Hittell tells of an instance where one man paid $26 in gold for a box of sedlitz powders worth fifty cents. At Fort Sutter $80 was the price of a barrel of flour. Pork or sugar was $400 per barrel. $100 paid for a pair of boots. Eggs sold at $3 apiece, and butter was $3 per pound. Prices in the back country were as bad as those in the city.

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1 Laughlin, J.Laurence. THE HISTORY OF BIMETALLISM IN THE UNITED STATES, p. 116

2 Hittell, J.S. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 454; Tuthill, F. HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA, p. 324-345; Sabin, E. GOLD, p. 234-239; Tooke and Newmarch. HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol. VI, p. 849-859.

Two travelers stopped to buy a lunch at a small establishment on the American River. The bill for the lunch was as follows:[1]

1 box	sardines	$16
1 lb.	hard bread	2
1 "	butter	6
½ "	cheese	3
2 bottles of	beer	16
	Total	$43

Rents were as high as prices. The Parker House in San Francisco rented for $110,000 per year, the Miner's Bank at $75,000, and the United States Post Office at $7,000 per year. The small supply of commodities together with the abundance of gold explain this rise in prices in California.

The movement toward higher prices in California could not long remain local. The fortunate Californians did not hoard their new gold but rapidly exchanged it for supplies and commodities, the greater part of which came from the Eastern States. In this way the new supplies of gold rapidly spread, making a great addition to the currency of the United States. A number of economists have attempted to prove that the enormous influx of new gold from California and Australia in the fifties and sixties was not the cause of the general rise in prices; but that other and more important forces were responsible for the increase. Among the individuals who held this anti-quantitative theory were Tooke and

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1 Sabin, E. GOLD, p. 236

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1 box sardines	$16
1 lb. hard bread	3
1 " butter	[illegible]
½ " cheese	3
2 bottles of beer	16
Total	$42

Rents were as high as prices. The Barber House in San Francisco rented for $110,000 per year, the Miner's Bank at $70,000, and the United States Post Office at $7,000 per year. The small supply of commodities together with the abundance of gold explain this rise in prices in California.

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1 Sabin, E. GOLD, p. 236

Newmarch,[1] Professor T.G. Carey,[2] D. Barbour,[3] and others. It was the opinion of Cairnes and Jevons of England, of Levasseur of France, and Soetbeer of Germany, eminent economists and statisticians of the last half century, that the great out put of gold in the fifties and sixties caused an average increase of prices of commodities equal to about twenty per cent.[4] Mr. Jevons maintained the increase of gold production had resulted in a fall of its purchasing power of about 9%, and possibly 15%.[5] According to Sauerbeck's, MOVEMENT OF PRICES 1840-1894, prices on all articles in the United States increased in the ratio of 83.5 to 117.5 between 1849 and 1859, which was equivalent to a 30% increase over 1849.[6] Prices in the New York market during this period are a good indication of this increase in prices. In 1848 beef, pork, and flour were $8.62, $11.75, and $6.50 per barrel; in 1857 the prices of the same articles were $15,25, $20,50, and $7.37 respectively.[7] The new supplies of gold,

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1 Tooke and Newmarch. HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol.VI, p. 46
2 Carey,T.G. THE GOLD OF CALIFORNIA AND ITS EFFECTS UPON PRICES. Hunt's Merchant Magazine, May 1856
3 Barbour,D. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOLD SUPPLY UPON PRICES AND PROFITS, p. 102-103
4 Cairnes, J. ESSAYS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY,P. 81; Appendix I, p. 360; Appendix H, p. 359
5 Jevons. A SERIOUS FALL IN THE VALUE OF GOLD ASCERTAINED, p. 1-108; 29, 31,
6 p. 21
7 Fawcett,W.L. GOLD AND DEBT, p. 265-267

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1 Tooke and Newmarch, HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol.VI, p. 65
2 Carey,T.G. THE GOLD OF CALIFORNIA AND ITS EFFECTS UPON PRICES. Hunt's Merchant Magazine, May 1858
3 Barbour,D. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOLD SUPPLY UPON PRICES AND PROFITS, p. 102-103
4 Cairnes,J. ESSAYS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY,P. 84, Appendix I, p. 360; Appendix N, p. 359
5 Jevons. A SERIOUS FALL IN THE VALUE OF GOLD ASCERTAINED, p. 1-108.
6 p. 21
7 Fewcett,W.F. GOLD AND DEBT, p. 265-267

then, did cause a rise in prices throughout the United States.

There is some question among economists as to whether an increase in currency adds real wealth to a country. The answer to this question depends upon the condition of currency at any given time. If there is sufficient money to carry on business, a new supply of gold is not necessary, and new supplies of gold or other specie will only serve to lower the value of money. It is generally agreed that a new supply of gold was needed in 1848; for revolutionary disturbances in Mexico and South America, which broke out in 1810 and continued till 1824, caused a great reduction of their output of gold. The world's production of gold declined to an average of $7,600,000 per year, which was not sufficient in the opinion of Mr. William Jacob, an authority of the period, to supply the amount used in the arts and make good the loss by abrasion, shipwreck, and other accident. [1] The new supplies were beneficial in so far as they supplied this lack, and in so far as they stimulated trade and industry. Mr. Cairnes maintains that the vast supplies of gold from California did not add wealth to the world, but merely transfered it from the non-producing to the gold producing countries.[2] This redistribution of wealth was brought about before the new supplies of gold had raised prices generally,

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1 White, Horace. MONEY AND BANKING, p. 49
2 Cairnes, J.E. ESSAYS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY, p. 43-52

thus giving the gold producing countries a chance to make a profit in trade with the non-producing countries before prices had become equalized. The gain of the gold producing countries was thus reaped at the expense of other nations.

The economic effects of the new gold in California itself are quite interesting. California is the only State in the Union which has not at some time had a depletion in currency. Due to the prejudice of the State in favor of gold, California was the only State in the Union which kept a gold standard during the Civil War. [1] California's adherence to a gold standard during the Civil War was probably due more to her independent attitude than to her economic strength; for the standard was maintained only with great financial losses and after a severe struggle. [2] Another interesting fact in the economic history of California is the devotion of her millionaires to public welfare. Leland Stanford who made his money in mining and railroads gave twenty million dollars for the building of the Leland Stanford Junior University. Senator Milton Latham sunk an immense fortune in building the road from picturesque Sansalito, through the beautiful San Rafael, over and through the mountains to Cazadero in Sanoma county. His enterprise entitled him to the gratitude of every citizen in the State, excepting the members of his own family. They

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1 Tooke and Newmarch, HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol. VI, p. 188-193
2 White, Horace. MONEY AND BANKING, p. 129-136

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1 Tooke and Newmarch, HISTORY OF PRICES, Vol. VI p. 188-193
2 White, Horace. MONEY AND BANKING, p. 189-186

never got returns from the millions he spent. The American tourist thanks his memory; for more beautiful country is not to be found anywhere than that through which the road travels. James G. Fair made millions in mining and invested it in his State for the good of all. Such millionaires as these made their money a blessing to their fellow men and their State.[1]

The value of California to the Union during the Civil War because of her gold supplies, cannot be stated with accuracy; but the State was a sort of Savings Bank during the war and perhaps her gold was one of the important factors which helped to save the Union.

We have just considered some of the effects of the new supplies of gold from California upon the economic history of th United States. Previously we mentioned the potency of the "lure of gold" in precipitating some seventy-seven thousand people upon the land of this new El Dorado within the space of two short years and the consequent establishment of a new center of American life upon the Pacific Coast. We will now consider the effects of the California gold discovery upon the ever moving Frontier of American history.

The history of the United States has been the history of a moving Frontier.[2] Beginning with a few colonies on the

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1 Allen and Avery. CALIFORNIA GOLD BOOK, p. 294-297, 294-309
2 Turner, F. THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY, p. 39-205; Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 1-242; THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 361-370, 448-459.

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2 Turner, F. THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY, p. 39-205; Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 1-242; THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 351-370, 412-459.

Atlantic Coast the nation has extended itself to the Pacific by a series of frontiers. History repeats itself in the case of the frontier. The winning of the first frontier established in America, its first white settlements. Later struggles added the frontiers of the Alleghanies and the Ohio of the Mississippi and Missouri. The winning of the last American frontier completed the conquest of the continent. The frontier reached the Missouri in 1821-1840 and here it was stopped by the Great American Desert and what is known as the Indian frontier.[1] This frontier extended in an unbroken line from the Red River and Texas in the south, to the Great Lakes in the north. The Indians had been moved time and time again and it was only with some difficulty that the tribes finally consented to be again moved to reservations within this frontier. By 1840 most of the tribes had consented, however, and were established within the frontier with the promise from the whites that they would never be moved again; that the whites would forever be excluded from the territory; and that a state should never be formed out of this Indian territory. By 1840 the Indian frontier had been erected and was believed to be the limit of American expansion. The Indian frontier was forever to be the western boundary of the United States. Then came the cry of "GOLD!" It mattered not that

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1 Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 14-33

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the gold was beyond the supposedly fixed and sacred Indian frontier. The gold seekers entered the Indian territory in hordes. Forty-two thousand people crossed the territory in the single year of 1849. The impassable Indian frontier was passed and in 1850 the first State of the Union was established on the Pacific Coast. The last American frontier had been reached and the settlement of the plains between the Pacific and the Missouri frontier became as necessary to the future of the nation as it was inevitable. The "LURE OF GOLD" had suddenly extended the frontier to the Pacific!

The Pacific Coast was the natural western boundary of the United States and once a territory as valuable as California was obtained as a foothold the westward extension of the Nation was practically guaranteed. Besides her millions in gold and her rich farmlands, California had the long-sought-for and ideal harbor for trade with the East. For years statesmen had looked forward to expansion that would give the United States a port on the Pacific that would command this trade. San Francisco proved to be such a port and as early as 1856 was fourth in the list of American cities for its tonnage. New York, Boston, and New Orleans only exceeded it; Philadelphia could claim only half its amount. To get the benefits of the natural resources of California and to share the trade advantages of the port of San Francisco, it was necessary to have some means of communication by land; consequently a

the gold was beyond the unprocessing tired and wanted Indian territory. The gold seekers entered the Indian territory in droves. Forty-two thousand people crossed the territory in the single year of 1849. The Government Indian Frontier was pushed and in 1850 the first State of the Union was established on the Pacific Coast. The last American frontier had been reached and the settlement of the plains between the Pacific and the Missouri Frontier became as necessary in the future of the Nation as it was inevitable. The "Land of Gold" had suddenly extended its frontier to the Pacific!

The Pacific-coast was the natural western boundary of the United States and once a territory as valuable as California was obtained as a foothold the westward extension of the Nation was practically guaranteed. Besides her mining in gold and her rich Pacific California had its long-sought for and ideal harbor in Puget Sound. For years statesmen had looked forward to expansion that would give the United States a port on the Pacific that would command Asia trade. Even Franklin proved to be small a port and as early as 1806 was fought in the list of American cities for its commerce. New York, Boston, and New Orleans only crowded it; Philadelphia could claim only half its amount. To get the benefits of the natural resources of California and to share the trade advantages of the port of San Francisco, it was necessary to have some means of communication by land, consequently a

transcontinental railroad was considered soon after the gold discoveries. Prominent Californians became agitators of this new project. Theodore Judah, an engineer of great ability who had gone to California in 1854, made the first surveys for the new road and formed a new Company known as the Central Pacific. Leading lights of the Company were Collis Huntington, Leland Stanford, Crocker, and Hopkins. These men put their private fortunes into the road and after great difficulties finally got the cooperation of State and National governments, and the Central Pacific was incorporated with an eastern company and the building of the Union Pacific transcontinental railway began. The road was completed in 1869. The East and West were united, but, more important, the intervening frontier was ceasing to divide. With the opening of the road a new period of national assimilation began, settlements grew up along the road, the plains were filled in with cattle and sheep ranches, and the doom of the Indian was written by the winding steel rails of a new conqueror, the railroad. Gold had been the principal factor in establishing a rich center of American life on the Pacific which made the extension of the United States to the Pacific not only possible but necessary, and had agitated and had helped to build the road which was a powerful factor in supressing the Indian and in populating the western plains.[1]

1 Paxson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 192-211; Daggett, S. HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC, p. 1-140

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1 Parson, F. THE LAST AMERICAN FRONTIER, p. 172-311; Sparrett, S. HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC, p. 1-140

The discovery of gold in California marked not only an epoch in the social, political, and economic history of the United States; but had a profound effect upon American literature.[1] This effect brought about perhaps two distinct results. It produced humor and the development of the short story as innovations to American literature, and added to American writers the names of three eminent novelists and chroniclers; Twain, Harte, and White, who were to preserve in literature the history of the gold rush and to express in writing the spirit of the new West.

It was natural that humor should develop in California. The incongruities of the mining population, the picturesque gathering of the immigrants, the vastness and richness of the mines, the leveling effects of democracy, the freedom of life, and the independence of spirit, all have tended to produce what Fred Pattee has called "the laughter of the West." The miners were inclined to see the funny side of life, humorous stories began to circulate among the gold diggers, and in the early fifties the newspapers and periodicals of California began to cater to their reading public by giving them bright and witty articles calculated to make them laugh. A new school of Californian humorists began to contribute a new kind of humor to American literature, and, in fact, to the

1 Pattee,F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1870, p. 25-44; Boynton,P.H. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, p. 401-408.

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world. Prominent members of this school were George Derby (John Phoenix), Charles Browne (Artimus Ward), Bret Harte, and Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain). The humor of these writers consists of several elements. A humorous effect was sometimes obtained by " a solemn protestation of truthfulness" followed by a story that on the face of it was impossible. Exaggeration was another element of the new humor. For example, the editor of the Phoenix "Herald" claimed that the paper was so popular that "we have now seven hundred and eighty-two Indians employed night and day in mixing adobe for the type molds." Irreverence was another characteristic. Derby claimed that the first practical joker was Judas Iscariot: he "sold" his master. Naive drollery and purposeful misspelling were other devices used by the humorists. The humorists evolved what may be called the American type of aphorism—"the concentrated bit of wisdom, old it may be, but expressed in such a quaint and striking way as to bring surprise and laughter." The following is an aphorism; "A reasonable amount of fleas is good fer a dog-- keeps him from broodin' over bein' a dog." Much of this humorous product cannot be called literature, but it was significant in that it was American in background and experience. For the first time America had a literature in the broad sense of the word, original and colored by its own life. [1]

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1 Battee, F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1870, p. 35-44; Boynton, F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, p. 401-408.

The work of the humorist is further significant; for it shows the spirit of the new and democratic West. He attacked sentimentality and "gush" and all that was affected and insincere. Nast, for instance in his later years declared: "I have never allowed myself to attack anything I did not believe in my soul to be wrong and deserving of the worst fate that could befall it." This statement is significant. The laughter of the period had depths and purpose in it that swept away weakness and wrongs. It aimed to puncture the glittering bubble of a tinsel conservatism. The work of the humorists prepared the way for the studies in prose of real life in California: works written by Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Stewart White.

Mark Twain could write of the West because he knew the West. For months he had lived among the miners of the Sierras as a prospector. He found no gold; but he did discover a unique area of American life and became so much a part of that life that his works concerning it have become source books of American history. Pattee says that there are three Mark Twains: there is the Mark Twain the droll comedian, who wrote for the masses and made them laugh; there is the Mark Twain, the indignant protester; there is the Mark Twain the Romancer. All three Mark Twains are Californians; but it is Twain's work as the Californian Romancer that lives. In such books as "Roughin' It" he pictures the joy, high

spirits, and excitement of those marvelous days when gold was plentiful and the West was young.[1] For him there is a fascination and romance about the life in the mines which makes it unnecessary to have a love plot in his novels. Twain's books are humorous; but their main value is the true picture they give of life in the gold regions of the new West. He has made the days of the gold rush live for future generations of Americans.[2]

Bret Harte occupies a place similar to that of Mark Twain as a Western writer. He was born in New York, went to California in 1857, and there entered journalism. The Californian newspapers at this time required short, pithy stories condensed to the lowest terms. They must possess vitality, humor, and moderness. Harte not only met these requirements but added a few improvements of his own to the short story. He studied Irving, Hugo, Dumas, and Michelet, and consequently had a wealth of background for short story writing. He did six things for the short story. He threw over it an atmosphere of locality that was entirely new to the readers of his day. He did for California what Dickens had done for London: he romanticized it, and gave it a mythical background. He seemingly made little of his settings

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1 Clemens, Samuel. ROUGHIN' IT
2 Pattee, F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1870, p. 45-62

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1 Clemens, Samuel. ROUGHING IT
2 Pattee, F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1870 p. 48-52

yet one carries away from his stories local color as the dominating impression. He further localized the short story by his western humor. His startling use of the paradox and antithesis, his highly individualistic types of characters, his impressionism, his superb technique, all went to improve the short story and to make it more popular than ever before. Harte's influence upon the short story is said to be greater than that of any other writer. Furthermore, his creation of "The Work on Red Mountain" gave a new character to American literature in the form of "M'liss Smith", a genuine Californian. No European or New Englander could have pictured such a character. His stories, too, have a peculiar Californian "twang" and are tinged with a fresh wild humor and the new atmosphere of the new West. Harte, then, influenced by the new life of the early Californian gold mining population, made important improvements in the short story and presented an entirely new character type to American literature. [1]

A more recent and contemporary writer of California and the gold days is Stewart Edward White. White was born in Michigan, but went to California in 1884, which, says Mr. White, "was a very new sort of place." Here he received his first inspiration for writing which resulted in his chron-

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1 Pattee,F.L. DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY, p. 220-244; Pattee,F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1870, p. 63-82

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1 Pattee, F.L. PROGRESSIVE OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY. p. 240-241; Pattee, F.L. HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE. NEW YORK 1919, p. 66-82

icles of western mining life[1] "The Claim Jumpers", "The Westerners", and "The Forty-Niners." Perhaps the most important thing to say of Mr. White is that he is a realist. What interests him most is the man or woman under the temporary veneer: the strong, steady current of human achievement, the adjustment of man to his enviroment. "A man", he says somewhere, "stands for what he is and does and not what he pretends. . . . the Westerner is individual." Again: "I've simply tried to present the West as it is, not in accordance with the artificial demands of a 'dramatic plot' or 'love interest', or 'artifical balance', or anything else that would interfere with a true picture." His pictures of the West[1] have given him a place in American literature beside Mark Twain and Bret Harte. Eugene Saxton says of White: "No one has written so well or so understandingly of the West, its people, and its life as he."

THE LURE OF GOLD, then, created a new center of Americanism on the Pacific, permeated with a new spirit of a new West. This spirit of democracy manifested itself in the humor and realism of a new Western literature presented by Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Stewart White. The speed with which this force made itself felt in American literature is a significant witness of its power.

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1 White, S. E. THE FORTY-NINERS; GOLD

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tales or western stories like "The Circle Imperfect", "The Westerners", and "The Lost Flamers." Perhaps the most important thing to say of Dr. White is that he is a realist. Her interests him most is the man or woman under the tempestuous weather, the strong, steady current of human endeavour, the adjustment of man to his environment. "A man", he says somewhere, "should for what he is and does and not what he pretends. . . . The Westerner is individual." Again: "I've simply tried to present the West as it is, not in accordance with the artificial demands of a 'dramatic plot' or 'love interest', or 'artificial balance', or anything else that would interfere with a true picture." His pictures of the West have given him a place in American literature beside Mary Austin and Bret Harte. Eugene Saxton says of Walter: "No one has written so well or so understandingly of the West, its people, and its life as he."

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1 White, S. E. THE PROMISE; GOLD

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"The love of money is the root of evil." "Gold is the mother of all good." The philosophy of the first part of the paradox has associated a curse with gold. A consideration of the history of the United States, however, would seem to emphasize the truth of the latter tenet. Gold has played an important part in the history of our Nation and, in the main, a beneficial one. Columbus himself was searching for the fabulous gold of the "Indies" when he discovered this continent, a fact which is evident from the instuctions given him by Spain and the prevailing stimulus behind navigation in his day. John Cabot was the first to discover and explore the mainland of North America, and he was searching for the gold mines of Japan. The Virginia Company was founded with the double purpose of finding a shorter route to "the Indies" and native gold in Virginia; but no actual metal was discovered in the United States until the California discovery of 1848. This discovery marked an epoch in the social, political, economic, and literary life of the United States. In two short years THE LURE OF GOLD precipitated about seventy-seven thousand people upon the Pacific Coast. About seventy per cent of this new population were Americans, who possessed the frontier qualities of democracy, nationalism, and resourcefulness. In 1850 California became the first state on the Pacific Coast and her wealth in gold , commerce, and agriculture made the building of a transcontinental

"The love of money is the root of evil." "Gold is the mother of all good." The philosophy of the first part of the paragraph has associated a curse with gold. A consideration of the history of the United States, however, would seem to emphasize the truth of the latter tenet. Gold has played an important part in the history of our Nation and, in the main, a beneficial one. Columbus himself was searching for the fabulous gold of the "Indies" when he discovered this continent, a fact which is evident from the instructions given him by Spain and the prevailing attitude behind navigation in his day. John Cabot was the first to discover and exploit the mainland of North America, and he was searching for the gold mines of Japan. The Virginia Company was founded with the double purpose of finding a shorter route to "the Indies" and native gold in Virginia; but, no actual metal was discovered in the United States until the California discovery of 1848. This discovery marked an epoch in the social, political, economic, and literary life of the United States. In two short years THE LAND OF GOLD precipitated about seventy-seven thousand people upon the Pacific Coast. About seventy per cent of this new population were laborers, who possessed the frontier qualities of democracy, nationalism, and individualism. In 1850 California became the first state in the Pacific Coast and her wealth in gold, commerce, and agriculture made for building of a transcontinental

railroad and the extension of the United States to the Pacific inevitable. THE LURE OF GOLD had extended the Frontier to the Pacific, the new metal added a much needed supply to currency, revived trade and industry, and the miners themselves formed a unique nucleus of American life which developed into a new West. The spirit of this new West has manifested itself by adding a new Western humor and new Western characters to American literature, innovations which have given us a distinct American literature for the first time in our history. If THE LURE OF GOLD has not been "the mother of all good" in the history of the United States, it has been, at least, an important factor in the discovery, development, and expansion of our country.

THE LURE OF GOLD

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